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Occupational Employment and Wages in El Paso, May 2016

Workers in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.00 in May 2016, about 25 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.86, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 19 of the 22 major occupational groups, including construction and extraction; computer and mathematical; and personal care and service. Local wages in the three remaining occupational groups were not statistically different from their respective national averages.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, El Paso employment was more highly concentrated in 6 of the 22 occupational groups including office and administrative support; sales and related; and education, training, and library. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including management; business and financial operations; and computer and mathematical. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the El Paso, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	El Paso	United States	El Paso	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$23.86	\$18.00*	-25
Management	5.1	2.7*	56.74	49.43*	-13
Business and financial operations	5.2	3.6*	36.09	30.22*	-16
Computer and mathematical	3.0	1.5*	42.25	29.73*	-30
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.9*	40.53	34.97*	-14
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.4*	35.06	29.54*	-16
Community and social service	1.4	1.2*	22.69	22.04	-3
Legal	0.8	0.5*	50.95	46.23	-9
Education, training, and library	6.2	8.0*	26.21	22.24*	-15
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	0.9*	28.07	20.21*	-28
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	5.5	38.06	33.10*	-13
Healthcare support	2.9	2.9	14.65	12.81*	-13
Protective service	2.4	3.7*	22.03	21.96	0
Food preparation and serving related	9.2	10.7*	11.47	9.63*	-16
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	2.9*	13.47	10.70*	-21
Personal care and service	3.2	4.7*	12.74	9.29*	-27
Sales and related	10.4	12.2*	19.50	14.81*	-24
Office and administrative support	15.7	18.0*	17.91	14.76*	-18
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1*	13.37	10.61*	-21
Construction and extraction	4.0	3.8	23.51	16.10*	-32
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.9	22.45	17.78*	-21

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the El Paso, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	El Paso	United States	El Paso	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Production	6.5	5.0*	17.88	13.74*	-23
Transportation and material moving	6.9	7.1	17.34	14.68*	-15

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the El Paso, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group – office and administrative support – was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. El Paso had 53,450 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 18.0 percent of local employment, significantly higher than the 15.7-percent national share. However, the local wage for this occupational group was significantly below the U.S. average. At \$14.76 an hour, the mean wage for El Paso office and administrative support workers was about 18 percent below the \$17.91 national average.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the office and administrative support group included general office clerks (10,580), customer service representatives (8,510), and stock clerks and order fillers (4,170). Among the higher-paying jobs were executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants, as well as first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, with mean hourly wages of \$25.15 and \$24.88, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were data entry keyers (\$10.24) and receptionists and information clerks (\$10.74). (Detailed occupational data for the office and administrative support group are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations go to [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2016/may/oes_21340.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the El Paso metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, data entry keyers were employed at 2.5 times the national average in El Paso, one of the highest location quotients for this job in all metropolitan areas, and medical secretaries, at 1.9 times the national rate. On the other hand, stock clerks and order fillers had a location quotient of 1.0 in El Paso, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Texas Workforce Commission.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels, and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2016 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, and November 2013. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 73 percent based on establishments and 69 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,477 establishments with a response rate of 63 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2016 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes El Paso County in Texas.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request . Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, El Paso, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2016

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations.....	53,450	1.1	\$14.76	\$30,700
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	3,040	1.0	24.88	51,760
Switchboard operators, including answering service	120	0.6	11.89	24,720
Bill and account collectors.....	(5)	(5)	13.92	28,950
Billing and posting clerks.....	1,080	1.1	13.95	29,010
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	2,830	0.9	15.68	32,620
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	490	1.4	16.90	35,160
Procurement clerks	250	1.7	18.17	37,790
Tellers	1,290	1.2	11.79	24,520
Financial clerks, all other.....	(5)	(5)	16.94	35,230
Court, municipal, and license clerks.....	230	0.8	18.27	38,010
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks	60	0.8	17.40	36,190
Customer service representatives.....	8,510	1.5	13.78	28,660
Eligibility interviewers, government programs.....	610	2.1	16.65	34,630
File clerks	410	1.5	12.20	25,380
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks	380	0.7	9.48	19,720
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan	190	0.5	15.63	32,500
Library assistants, clerical	150	0.7	12.23	25,440
Loan interviewers and clerks.....	240	0.5	22.44	46,680
New accounts clerks	170	2.0	12.81	26,650
Order clerks.....	440	1.2	14.26	29,660
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping	400	1.4	15.91	33,090
Receptionists and information clerks.....	1,210	0.6	10.74	22,330
Reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks	180	0.6	20.64	42,940
Information and record clerks, all other	730	2.1	16.90	35,140
Cargo and freight agents.....	230	1.2	26.66	55,440
Couriers and messengers	320	2.0	10.90	22,660
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers.....	220	1.1	17.35	36,080
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	610	1.5	14.52	30,200
Meter readers, utilities	60	0.8	15.98	33,230
Postal service clerks.....	100	0.6	23.81	49,530
Postal service mail carriers	530	0.8	23.67	49,230
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators.....	160	0.7	23.62	49,120
Production, planning, and expediting clerks.....	590	0.9	18.02	37,490
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks.....	2,040	1.4	11.74	24,420
Stock clerks and order fillers	4,170	1.0	10.85	22,570
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping.....	300	1.9	12.92	26,880
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants	540	0.4	25.15	52,320
Legal secretaries	400	1.0	18.01	37,450
Medical secretaries	2,250	1.9	12.23	25,430
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive.....	4,150	0.9	13.83	28,760
Computer operators	100	1.0	16.50	34,310
Data entry keyers	1,030	2.5	10.24	21,300
Word processors and typists	40	0.3	17.67	36,750
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks	370	0.6	17.60	36,600
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service	240	1.2	13.81	28,720
Office clerks, general.....	10,580	1.7	14.58	30,330
Office machine operators, except computer.....	100	0.8	12.29	25,550

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, El Paso, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2016 - Continued

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support workers, all other	140	0.3	18.16	37,760

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the El Paso, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_21340.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimate not released.